

EXPLOSION AT LORD ASHTOWN'S LODGE, GLENAHIERY,
COUNTY WATERFORD.

COPIES of the Reports of County Inspector JENNINGS, Royal Irish Constabulary,
to the Police Authorities, dated 14th August, 1907, 17th August, 1907,
and 14th September, 1907.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty.



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ATTEMPT TO WRECK GLENAHIERY LODGE, PROPERTY OF LORD ASHTOWN.

WATERFORD.

DUNGARVAN, 14th August, 1907.

I have to report that whilst here on inspection I received a wire at 10½ a.m. that an attempt was made to blow up Lord Ashtown's shooting residence about a mile from Ballymacarberry, by exploding a bomb of some description on his drawing-room window sill about 1½ a.m. to-day. I visited the scene at 1½ p.m. and found that one of the windows on W. side of house was blown in by force of explosion, which also blew down the door opposite, leading into the hall, shattering glass in two other windows in same room; the force of explosion crossed the hall into room opposite and also shattered the glass in one window thereof. The force also passed into back of hall and forced asunder and shattered a large circular fanlight placed at height of upper storey. Lord Ashtown was in bed over the drawing-room and heard the noise. Soon after, his gamekeeper Graham roused him up and both proceeded downstairs to find the curtains of drawing-room in flames and a strong smell of burning petroleum. They succeeded in putting out the flames, meanwhile sending the under-gamekeeper to Police Barracks for Police. The gamekeeper's attention was first drawn to the matter by his wife who was nursing a child. So far it has not been ascertained if any persons outside the house heard of the noise. Under the window were found the shattered remains of an oval-shaped metal pot (about 1 foot by 9 inches) and its cover, also an iron clamping which would appear to have passed round the pot and fastened at upper ends with a cross piece with holes at ends to fit in on the extremities of the other which were prepared for nuts to be screwed on and so held tight. A quantity too of burnt fuse and a piece of lath with remains of fuse in three separate holes about four inches apart, evidently intended to regulate or direct the several three fuses. In the lid were also found holes drilled apparently to receive the fuses. A sack too saturated with paraffin and remains of at least four bottles which likely contained paraffin; also an old can for purposes of carrying the various articles. I had a long interview with Lord Ashtown. He suspects none of his Waterford tenantry, &c., for the outrage, but is of opinion it was planned by some of his Woodlawn tenants and aided by some one in the neighbourhood of Glenahery. He does not wish for police protection (personal), but would like to have a patrol about whilst he remains. This I have ordered. He appeared to be very little disturbed by what no doubt was a most diabolical attempt to wreck his house and perhaps destroy his own life, whilst it is providential the house itself was not at least consumed by fire. I was inspecting at Ballymacarberry on yesterday afternoon, and made most particular inquiries as to the state of affairs on his property. I learned for past few months there was not the least friction, and I was assured by the Sergeant there was not the least ill-will against his Lordship. At this time, it now turns out, Lord Ashtown was actually in the Lodge (having arrived at 7.30 p.m. previous evening, Monday 11th instant.)* The police, who on every previous occasion had been informed of his arrival, had not on this occasion. On the last one his gamekeeper, Graham, wrote down at once to the sergeant, and on this, when the outrage occurs, the first learned of his presence is the report about 2 a.m. the day of the outrage. For past five or six months Graham and family have been occupying rooms in the Lodge. But a gamekeeper's lodge has been preparing for him in the grounds, and it was expected in a very short time he would be removing to latter. At the time of occurrence there was in the lodge Graham, his wife, and her sister. In coachhouse in yard was the under-

* [Note by Deputy Inspector-General.—Monday was the 12th.]

gamekeeper, and in the house in grounds intended for Graham was Mrs. Graham's brother. In addition, of course, to Lord Ashtown. It is inconceivable how any man would approach the house, as in this instance, and run risks of detection with practically four armed, and experts in use of firearms, on the premises. I do not believe any of the natives would countenance or conceive such an outrage. Lord Ashtown, as a landlord, has always been well disposed towards and appreciated by his tenants. The friction which some months ago existed in regard to rabbits was entirely owing to the gamekeepers, and for some months past there has not been the slightest renewal. The appointment, too, of one of his large tenants—a Mr. Nugent—quite close to scene, to the Magistracy, was generally calculated to make for peace and concord in the locality. Lord Ashtown will, no doubt, seek compensation from the County for malicious injuries, and so expressed himself. I have given the fullest instructions to Head-Constable O'Leary and local Sergeant (who are both very intelligent men) as to conduct of inquiries, and I am sure nothing will be omitted to elucidate as far as possible the mystery surrounding the occurrence. This is a very hasty report, but I wish Government, as early as possible, to be acquainted with its main features. The Chief Inspector of Explosives has been communicated with, but does not at present consider a visit necessary. Gunpowder, more probably blasting powder, was used and the paraffin or petroleum for the purpose of setting premises on fire.

I. R. B. JENNINGS, C.I.

I.G.

P.S.—I give a rough sketch over of house.

II.

WATERFORD, 17th August, 1907.

I visited scene again yesterday and spent considerable time looking into matters in connection with my first visit. It is by no means clear what was the motive, or how or where the outrage was planned. The only point of which there is no doubt is that whoever placed the explosive engine had a thorough knowledge of the domestic arrangements and of the premises. It appears to me that the blasting or other powder was separate in the pot and directly connected with the fuses, and on explosion the paraffin (which had previously been spilled into the pot) was scattered and ignited, and exploded, which, flaming up, discoloured the wall at each side of and above the window, and that some was driven into the room causing framework of window, shutter, curtains, to blaze. As District-Inspector Preston was absent on duty at Randalstown, County Antrim, I personally instructed Head Constable O'Leary, whom I found at scene on first occasion. But as the District-Inspector has now returned he will have every opportunity of fully enquiring into and investigating the occurrence.

I. R. B. JENNINGS, C.I.

Inspector-General.

III.

EXPLOSION AT GLENAHIERY, 14TH AUGUST, 1907.

COUNTY INSPECTOR'S OFFICE,

WATERFORD, 14th September, 1907.

Submitted as requested by Inspector-General's Minute of 11th instant, 93797 C. I think it right to mention that from my examination of the scene I came to the conclusion (1) that the window was shut, (2) shutters closed but not barred, and (3) door shut or laid to, and that (4) a considerable quantity of powder (not necessarily "blasting") was used. I have no reason to change that opinion from a perusal of this report.* As the latter does not purport to be complete, I can add nothing further. The claim for compensation I now learn will not be entertained on 19th instant, as previously intimated, but on 21st instant at Dungarvan.

I. R. B. JENNINGS, C.I.

I.G.

(*NOTE.—The report here referred to is District Inspector Preston's report of 7th September, 1907, already laid upon the Table.)

